

SITUATION REPORT NO. 6
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: MARCH 27, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from the previous report.
3. DAMAGES: During the March 21-23 weekend, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) recorded 25- to 50-year flood events at 10 gauging stations along the Knife, Cannonball and Heart Rivers, according to a preliminary review of stream flow discharge measurements. A gauge on Cedar Creek near its junction with the Cannonball River indicated record inflows of 13,480 cubic feet per second (cfs) on March 24. The highest amount previously recorded was 13,400, which occurred in 1978.

Along the Cannonball River, a flood warning by the National Weather Service remained in effect for eastern Sioux and southeastern Morton Counties on March 27. Although flood waters have been receding, the ice-filled river is still out of its banks. The threat exists for ice jams to vary the river levels quickly and without warning.

As the Missouri River at Williston continues above flood stage, water is backing up on land owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), located south and east of the Lewis and Clark Bridge in Williams County. On March 27, the river level at Williston was recorded at 23.48 feet; flood stage is 20 feet.

The Missouri River at Bismarck was recorded at 11.97 feet on March 27; flood stage is 16 feet. To accommodate high tributary inflows into the river, the USACE reduced Garrison Dam releases on March 25 to 4,000 cfs, the lowest amount since construction of the dam. On March 26, the USACE increased flows to 6,000 cfs. It is anticipated that the USACE could raise the releases to 10,000 cfs on March 27 based on ice action in the river channel.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: The American Red Cross served 271 meals on March 25. The next day, volunteers provided 62 lunches at the Red Cross shelter and 105 at a mobile site to Beulah flood victims and flood fighters. The Red Cross anticipated serving 150 dinners on March 26.

In Walsh County, the Red Cross is providing meals to volunteers assisting with sandbagging efforts.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: N.D. State Water Commission and USGS officials are monitoring Missouri River tributaries, including the Beaver Creek near Linton and Apple Creek near Bismarck. As temperatures push toward highs of 50s and 60s, these tributaries are beginning to flow.

N.D. State Radio Communications has provided a radio frequency for dike walkers in Grand Forks County. The agency has also supplied eight portable radios each to Pembina and Grand Forks Counties.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management is compiling information on sandbag vendors and construction companies that have dozers and sandbag machines available for use.

As of March 27, the Division of Emergency Management has received 41 requests for assistance from local government. Division staff members are coordinating with the USACE, the N.D. National Guard and other state agencies to address these requests.

The National Guard should complete testing and modifications of a new sandbag machine by March 31. The machine's maximum capability for filling sandbags is 4,800 bags per hour. The National Guard will provide a team to transport, down load and fill the hopper with sand. Local jurisdictions are to provide labor and materials. Requests for the machine are being coordinated through the Division of Emergency Management.

Flood preparations in Barnes County have been underway as the county and city of Valley City officials conduct flood informational meetings for residents. County, city and volunteer organizations have met to discuss flood response efforts. The emergency manager has distributed informational sheets to residents, listing key phone numbers and flood preparedness information. Barnes County officials purchased 50,000 additional sandbags; the county now has 90,000, and Valley City has 70,000 sandbags. County workers have been distributing sandbags and have established two distribution sites for sand.

Nelson County and city of Lakota officials are monitoring sites where snowmelt is accumulating in low-lying areas.

The city of Grafton Public Works Department has established a 24-hour operation to clear snow and ice from the city's emergency levee. The city began a sandbagging operation on

March 24.

In Grant County, contractors have been hired to push large ice chunks left on flooded roadways after flood waters receded to their channels.

The Ward County emergency manager has ordered an additional 15,000 sandbags to replace the county's depleted stock.

Emergency declarations were issued by Adams County and the cities of Lakota in Nelson County and Grandin in Cass County. Disaster declarations were signed by officials for Dunn County and the cities of Reile's Acres in Cass County and Mott in Hettinger County. Since late February, when the first flood declaration was signed, 15 counties, 29 cities and one township have issued emergency declarations. Officials for seven counties and two cities have signed disaster declarations.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The Weather Service will issue the next "Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook" on March 28.

Apple Creek in Burleigh County has started its runoff and is out of its banks at record or near-record levels, covering roadways.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director